

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

INR-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PRS-01 IO-03 L-01 DODE-00 PM-03

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O P 151205Z APR 75 ZFF 4

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8338

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2893

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS: CARAMANLIS RESPONDS TO DEMIREL'S
CRITICISMS

1. PM CARAMANLIS ISSUED BRIEF STATEMENT LATE LAST NIGHT, APRIL
14, RESPONDING TO PREMIER DEMEREL'S CRITICAL REMARKS EARLIER SAME
DAY WHICH WERE TRIGGERED BY CARAMANLIS' COMMENTS IN AN INTERVIEW
PUBLISHED BY LE MONDE IN ITS APRIL 12-13 ISSUE. LE MONDE
REPORTED CARAMANLIS AS SAYING THERE WAS DOUBT ABOUT TURKEY'S
GOOD FAITH AND HE CALLED FOR ITS ISOLATION IN ORDER TO RESTORE IT
TO REASON. HE WONDERED WHETHER EUROPE COULD NOT QUARANTINE
A "GOVERNMENT WHICH SYSTEMATICALLY VIOLATES THE PRINCIPLES
AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS."
DEMIREL WAS REPORTED AS CHARGING IN RETURN THAT GREECE
WAS ACTING IN A DANGEROUS WAY IN ITS RELATIONS WITH TURKEY
AND THAT THE POSITION TAKEN BY CARAMANLIS COULD BRING THE TWO
COUNTRIES TO A SHOWDOWN.

2. THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY CARAMANLIS READS AS FOLLOWS
(EMBASSY'S UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION): "AVAILING HIMSELF OF
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THE OPPORTUNITY AFFORDED BY MY STATEMENT TO THE FRENCH PRESS,

MR. DEMIREL TRIES TO EXONERATE TURKEY OF RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE PRESENT TENSION IN GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS.

3. "I RECALL THAT THE TENSION WAS CAUSED BY TURKISH ACTIONS AND
THAT THE SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES WHICH THE TURKISH
GOVERNMENT CLAIMS IT SEEKS--AND WHICH WE ALSO DESIRE--WOULD
HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED MOST EASILY IF TURKEY WERE TO DISPLAY
THE SAME CALM AND WISDOM WE HAVE."

4. THE ATHENS PRESS PLAYED UP THE EXCHANGE. SOME OF THE
HEADLINES READ: "CARAMANLIS DEMANDS PRUDENCE FROM TURKEY"
(TO VIMA); "CARAMANLIS REPLIES TO DEMIREL'S PROVOCATION
WITH STATEMENT LAST NIGHT--THE TENSION WAS CAUSED BY
TURKISH ACTIONS" (KATHIMERINI); "DUEL BETWEEN CARAMANLIS
AND DEMIREL--TURKEY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TENSION"
(ELEFTHEROS COSMOS). ONLY EDITORIAL COMMENT APPEARED IN
COSMOS WHICH WROTE THAT TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IS MADE BY
THE TURKISH MILITARY AND THUS WHAT DEMIREL THINKS IS
INSIGNIFICANT. MOREOVER, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE
(FOR DEMIREL) TO ASCERTAIN THE FACTS BEFORE PROCEEDING
TO MAKE PUBLIC REMARKS.

5. COMMENT: THE AMBASSADOR HAD THE OCCASION TO SPEAK
SEPARATELY TO BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AND DEFENSE
MINISTER AVEROFF LAST EVENING AND DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR
CONVERSATIONS THIS UNFORTUNATE PUBLIC EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE
GREEK AND TURKISH PRIME MINISTERS WAS DISCUSSED. BOTH BITSIOS
AND AVEROFF SEEMED DISMAYED AND INDICATED THEY WOULD BE DOING
THEIR UTMOST WITH CARAMANLIS AND LOCALLY SO THAT THIS INCIDENT
WOULD BLOW OVER QUICKLY. AVEROFF SAID THAT CARAMANLIS TOLD HIM
THAT HE (CARAMANLIS) HAD GIVEN THE INTERVIEW TO LE MONDE SOME
10-12 DAYS AGO -- WITHOUT ANY SPECIAL THOUGHT IN MIND AT THE
TIME THAT DEMIREL WOULD BE FORMING A GOVERNMENT IN ANKARA --
WITH THE IDEA THAT IT WOULD BE PUBLISHED IN PARIS AS HE
(CARAMANLIS) WAS ARRIVING THERE ON HIS OFFICIAL VISIT.
HOWEVER, REGRETTABLY AND PROBABLY FOR JOURNALISTIC REASONS,
LE MONDE CHOSE TO PUBLICIZE THE INTERVIEW THIS PAST SUNDAY
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE TO THE DEMIREL
GOVERNMENT IN ANKARA.

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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